

REMARKS

The Office Action dated September 22, 2004 has been carefully reviewed. Claims 1-9 are pending in this patent application. By this amendment, claims 1, 6, and 9 have been amended, claims 2-3 have been canceled, and claims 10-20 have been added. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

First 35 U.S.C. § 102 Rejection

Claims 1-6, 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by White et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,725,592). Claims 1, 6, and 9 have been amended to more clearly define the invention, while claims 2-3 have been canceled. Reconsideration of claims 1, 4-6, 8, and 9 is respectfully requested.

Discussion Regarding Patentability of Amended Claim 1

Amended Claim 1

Claim 1, as amended, recites the following limitations:

wherein said stem member is located completely outside of said first elongated tapered bore.

White does not disclose this limitation. In particular, each of the five embodiments of White shown in its FIGS. 1-5 requires that the stem member be located within the elongated tapered bore defined by its respective sleeve (or body) component 120. (See, e.g., White at column 11, lines 17-23 - "two male tapered portions 411 and 412 that fit within the body component 120". Consequently, since portion 412 fits within female portion 431 of stem 130, stem

130 must be located within the sleeve 120.) Thus, none of the stem members of the various embodiments of White are "located completely outside of the first elongated tapered bore" of said sleeve component as called for in amended claim 1.

It is axiomatic that anticipation of a claim under 35 U.S.C. § 102 is proper only if the prior art reference discloses each and every element of the claim. Since White does not disclose each and every element of Applicants' amended claim 1, White does not anticipate Applicants' amended claim 1.

Discussion Regarding Patentability of Claims 4-6, 8, and 9

Each of claims 4-6, 8, and 9 depends directly or indirectly from amended claim 1. As a result, each of claims 4-6, 8, and 9 is allowable for, at least, the reasons hereinbefore discussed with regard to amended claim 1.

Second 35 U.S.C. § 102 Rejection

Claims 1 and 3-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Despres, III et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,682,568). Claims 1, 6, and 9 have been amended to more clearly define the invention, while claim 3 has been canceled. Reconsideration of claims 1 and 4-9 is respectfully requested.

Discussion Regarding Patentability of Amended Claim 1

Amended Claim 1

As stated above, amended claim 1 recites the following limitations:

wherein said stem member is located completely outside of said first

elongated tapered bore.

Despres does not disclose this limitation. In particular, as clearly can be seen in its FIGS. 1-5, the stem of Despres is located within the elongated bore of the sleeve. Since Despres does not disclose each and every element of Applicants' amended claim 1, Despres does not anticipate Applicants' amended claim 1.

Discussion Regarding Patentability of Claims 4-9

Each of claims 4-9 depends directly or indirectly from amended claim 1. As a result, each of claims 4-9 is allowable for, at least, the reasons hereinbefore discussed with regard to amended claim 1.

Double Patenting Rejections

Claims 1-6 and 8-9 were rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness type double patenting over certain claims of Dwyer et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,723,129) or Dwyer et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,706,072) in view of certain other prior art references. Claims 2 and 3 has been canceled. And Terminal Disclaimers relating to the '129 Dwyer patent and '072 Dwyer patent are being submitted herewith. Thus, neither of the Dwyer patents can be used as a prior art reference, and thus all the double patenting rejections are no longer valid. Thus, claims 1-6 and 8-9 are believed to be allowable over the prior art.

Newly Added Claims 10-20

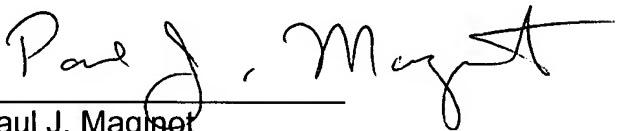
Newly added claims 10-20 recite novel and nonobvious limitations. Thus, each of claims 10-20 is allowable over the cited art. Moreover, each of claims 10-13 depends directly or indirectly from amended claim 1. As a result, each of claims 10-13 is allowable for, at least, the reasons hereinbefore discussed with regard to amended claim 1. The patentability of amended claim 1 is relevant to the patentability of new claim 14, and thus new claim 14 is allowable for at least the reasons hereinabove discussed with regard to amended claim 1. And each of claims 15-20 depends directly or indirectly from new claim 14. As a result, each of claims 15-20 is allowable for, at least, the reasons hereinbefore discussed with regard to new claim 14.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Action to that end is hereby solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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